



KATHLEEN BABINEAUX BLANCO
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September 12, 2005

The Honorable George W. Bush
The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20502

VIA FACSIMILIE: (202) 456-1907

Dear Mr. President:

The toll of Hurricane Katrina on the State of Louisiana is clearly now becoming evident. Direct losses from the disaster are now expected to total over \$100 billion, which makes this event the single largest natural disaster in the history of the United States. In addition to these drastic losses, I am equally concerned about the indirect losses from this hurricane, to include: a dramatic economic decline of the areas most impacted by this event; and the subsequent decline in State and local tax revenues (which translate into a decline in our ability to provide services at exactly the time when such services will be most needed, during the years of recovery).

The severity and magnitude of these impacts lead me to the conclusion that at least over the next year, the State of Louisiana will be unable to provide for the cost-share match associated with Federal disaster assistance under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act ("the Stafford Act"). It is for this reason that I am asking you to take the significant step of allowing FEMA to provide 100% of the cost of this disaster assistance under the Act until August 29, 2006, exactly one-year from the date that Hurricane Katrina impacted our State. Providing this level of assistance will allow time for the State of Louisiana and the Federal government to better understand both the short- and long-term economic impacts of this catastrophe, and thus determine if a continuation of the 100% Federal cost-share is warranted beyond the one-year mark.

The State of Louisiana is in great need of Federal assistance both immediately and in the long-term aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. I look forward to your approval of my request as soon as possible. If you have any questions or would like to discuss this matter further, please contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen Babineaux Blanco".

Kathleen Babineaux Blanco
Governor